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ABSTRACT

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The 12 titles deal with the following topics: (1) the relational nature of humor, (2) pragmatism and transaction, (3) within-channel redundancy versus between-channel redundancy in instructional material and its association with amount learned, (4) verbal synchrony and the maintenance of rapport between collegiate instructors and their students, (5) a communications model for community renewal by a two-year branch campus in Ohio, (6) the role of communication during the process of social change in Grenada--1979-1983, (7) a study of differences in the communicative patterns of normal and hyperactive children, (8) scholarly communication versus classroom communication: an approach to the research versus teaching question, (9) enhanced conversational recall and reduced conversational interference as a function of cognitive complexity, (10) approaches to communication policy--a comparative study of the British and American examples, (11) oral histories of 10 middle-management women, and (12) communicative features of educational computer software. (HOD)

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Abstracts of the following dissertations are included in this collection:

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Bolen, Robert Dale
PRAGMATISM AND TRANSACTION: COMPATIBLE PERSPECTIVES FOR COMMUNICATION

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VERBAL SYNCHRONY AND THE MAINTENANCE OF RAPPORT BETWEEN COLLEGIATE INSTRUCTORS AND THEIR STUDENTS

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A COMMUNICATIONS MODEL FOR COMMUNITY RENEWAL BY A TWO-YEAR BRANCH CAMPUS IN OHIO

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APPROACHES TO COMMUNICATION POLICY: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE BRITISH AND AMERICAN EXAMPLES

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COMMUNICATING CULTURE: ORAL HISTORIES OF TEN MIDDLE-MANAGEMENT WOMEN

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THE RELATIONAL NATURE OF HUMOR

Order No. DA8508935

BATES, LOUIS C., JR., PH.D. *University of Colorado at Boulder*, 1984. 159pp. Director: Donald K. Darnell

The purpose of this study was to investigate the transactional nature of humor in a dyadic context. Previous communication researchers have relied on unidimensional explanations for the complex process we call humor. Consequently, humor research is riddled with inconsistent and inconclusive research findings, and humor theory is fragmented and incomplete.

The method of investigation for this dissertation is qualitative in nature. More specifically, data collection methods consisted of using Wheeless' Interpersonal Solidarity Scale, audio-recordings of the dyad meetings, and in-depth interviews of each participant. The subjects of this study were 21 task oriented dyads; debate teams from argumentation classes at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Glaser and Strauss' Constant Comparative Method was used to analyze the data.

The results of this investigation are important in a number of ways. First, this study found support for the idea that humor is a transactional process, and that the nature of the relationship between the interactants is the most important factor in determining whether or not something is perceived as funny. Second, the functions of humor varied depending on the nature of the relationship. Generally, in dyads moving toward closeness, the humor was identified as one of the main factors leading to closeness. In dyads moving toward distance, humor functioned to manage conflict situations, and to set relational boundaries. Finally, the study identified the relationship between humor use and conflict management, and humor use and self-disclosure; it suggested the importance of humor in developing close relationships; and found that put-down humor is far less predominant in dyads than in small groups.

PRAGMATISM AND TRANSACTION: COMPATIBLE PERSPECTIVES FOR COMMUNICATION

Order No. DA8508939

BOLEN, ROBERT DALE, PH.D. *University of Colorado at Boulder*, 1984. 133pp. Director: Donald K. Darnell

Pragmatism has been defined and utilized in a variety of ways. Within the communication field it has most often been perceived as signifying a practical approach to speechmaking, a branch of semiotics, or as a representative of one of the systems perspectives. Each of these provides potentially useful conceptualizations. Each is however representative of a more narrow perspective than this author favors.

An investigation was made of the historic foundations of pragmatism as exemplified in the works of Charles Peirce, William James, and John Dewey. These authors' concepts were compared with the ideas of humanism, wholism, and evolutionary change which are presented as the three distinguishing characteristics of transactional communication theory.

This author feels that there is ample evidence of primary suppositions central to the traditional pragmatic perspective which are also central to the contemporary transactional perspective in communication. This is not to argue that traditional pragmatism and transaction are synonymous but that they are certainly compatible.

This study concludes that traditional pragmatism offers a productive source of conceptualizations for analysis by contemporary communication scholars. While there is always the temptation to produce "new" and exciting alternatives, the significance of this study is that it proposes a substantial thread--traditional pragmatism--which, instead of further fracturing the field of communication, provides opportunity to construct a more unified and perhaps more productive theoretical structure.

WITHIN-CHANNEL REDUNDANCY VERSUS BETWEEN-CHANNEL REDUNDANCY IN INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL AND ITS ASSOCIATION WITH AMOUNT LEARNED

Order No. DA8515717

EVANS, SHARON ANN, PH.D. *North Texas State University*, 1985. 89pp.

The problem of this study is whether between-channel redundancy in an instructional audio-visual message enhances immediate recall of information more than within-channel redundancy. A secondary purpose was to compare three forms of between-channel redundancy: audio-video, audio-video-caption, and audio-caption with one form of within-channel redundancy: video-caption. These comparisons were designed to demonstrate which form of redundancy had a higher association with recall of information.

The subjects were administered the Kentucky Comprehensive Listening Inventory to measure listening skills, and the Receiver Apprehension Inventory to identify subjects who experienced significantly high apprehension as receivers of information. Then the subjects were randomly divided into four treatment groups and shown an eight minute newscast. All four groups were presented the same instructional message, but the mode of presentation differed depending upon the treatment group. After viewing the instructional program each member of each group was given a forty item multiple-choice retention inventory based on the information presented in the newscast.

The data were presented in terms of correct responses on the Kentucky Comprehensive Listening Inventory and the forty item retention inventory. Discriminate analysis was used to determine which items from the multiple-choice retention inventory accounted for the most variance. Thirteen items were found to account for the greatest amount of variance. Reliability estimates were calculated for all four story categories and for the forty items collectively. All reliability estimates were acceptable.

A close examination of the test scores, means, and treatment groups illustrated that treatment Group I, audio-video, did produce a significant difference from the other three treatment groups. Treatment Group III, audio-caption, edged out treatment Group II, audio-video-caption. This was expected because Group II required that one channel, sight, use two sources of information, the visual picture and the caption. Overall, between-channel redundancy produced higher means and higher test scores than did within-channel redundancy, all other factors being equal.

VERBAL SYNCHRONY AND THE MAINTENANCE OF RAPPORT BETWEEN COLLEGIATE INSTRUCTORS AND THEIR STUDENTS

Order No. DA8511073

GALLO, FRED PHILIP, PH.D. *University of Pittsburgh*, 1984. 73pp. Chairman: Alex J. Ducanis

This study examined the effect of sensory predicate matching on the development of rapport within a collegiate instructional context. Sensory predicate matching is a form of verbal synchrony, whereby the instructor matches categories of sensory predicates evident in the student's speech. This study was limited to an examination the effect of this variable on rapport maintenance within individual discussion situations.

To test the effect of this procedure the design entailed semi-structured discussions which simulated a collegiate instructional/discussion context. Experimental manipulation of instructor verbal behavior was conducted with the following three conditions being assessed: *Unspecified* (providing a baseline by generating unspecified predicates in response to *Ss*' verbalizations), *Matching* (a condition in which *Ss*' sensory predicates were synchronized by instructors), and *Mismatching* (a condition in which the *Ss*' sensory predicates were mismatched). Each condition entailed a method of instructor behavior used throughout the discussions. Other relevant variables such as voice tone/tempo, gestures, posture, etc. were controlled for as much as possible. At the

conclusion of each discussion, *Ss* completed the Anderson and Anderson Interview Rating Scale. This scale provided an operational definition of rapport and scores to measure the degree of rapport experienced by *Ss* in each of the experimental conditions. Groups of scores for the three conditions provided the data for statistical analysis.

An ANOVA applied to the data yielded non-significant results. The implications of these findings with respect to the complexity of rapport, Neuro-Linguistic Programming, design limitations and implications for future research were examined.

A COMMUNICATIONS MODEL FOR COMMUNITY RENEWAL BY A TWO-YEAR BRANCH CAMPUS IN OHIO

Order No. DA8516413

MAHAN, JOHN KENNETH, PH.D. *Kent State University*, 1985. 224pp. Directors: Dale L. Cook, Charles M. Foreman

One of the traditional missions of the community college has been service to community, in the four-year sector entitled *public* service. The two-year branch campus in Ohio, somewhere between each, but like the community college in this respect, has been charged by the Ohio Board of Regents to perform community service. It is a contention of this study that performance of community service is project-oriented and tends to be fragmented and even chaotic--both in the community college and on the branch campus. Verification of the former was predicated upon literature review, of the latter upon visits to Ohio's branch campuses and interviews with campus executive officers and with others responsible for community service.

In response to this assumption, the further purpose of this study was to create a descriptive model, that is, a non-mathematical model, which would enable the Ohio two-year branch campus to function in community renewal, a refinement of community service. The model has two bases. The first is communication theory and the broadly accepted thesis that effectual communication is the quintessence of successful organizations. The second and corollary base is general system theory, the epigrammatic principle of which is: "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts."

Application of the model by a two-year branch campus will facilitate community renewal both directly and indirectly: the campus, as a coalescent force, will assume multifarious roles--educator, catalyst, leader, change agent, etc.--in the attempt to link community efforts to a common goal--renewal. Because of the unique role of the campus, with respect to its traditional purpose--instruction, its functionality as resource (personal and research), and its position in the model, it of all community organizations can best accomplish this end.

To reiterate, the model was designed for the two-year branch campus. Nonetheless, its descriptive and utilitarian nature, in theory, should permit its application to other two-year systems and, with adaptations for size and elaboration, to four-year systems as well.

THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION DURING THE PROCESS OF SOCIAL CHANGE IN GRENADA, 1979-1983

Order No. DA8513261

MCLEAN, POLLY ELISE, PH.D. *The University of Texas at Austin*, 1984. 288pp. Supervisor: Emile G. McAnany

The relationship of communication to the social change process in Grenada is examined within a framework of the socioeconomic and political transformation process that occurred between March 1979 and October 1983. The evidence shows that the communication systems (mass media and interpersonal) were directly affected by the policies adopted by the vanguard party, the New Jewel Movement (NJM) prior to 1979, and integrated into the system of government after 1979.

Between March 1979 and October 1983, the NJM and the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) sought to change the socioeconomic and political structure through a series of dramatic reforms and programs centered on more popular participation, self-reliance, and mobilization of the masses of people. These policies directly influenced the interpersonal communication process by creating an interactive horizontal communication system between the government and the people. In addition, the state owned and operated mass media were used to facilitate and consolidate the Revolutionary ideology of the NJM.

The leading conclusion is that the NJM/PRG was the primary driving force behind the social change process which in turn directly influenced the communication systems.

A STUDY OF DIFFERENCES IN THE COMMUNICATIVE PATTERNS OF NORMAL AND HYPERACTIVE CHILDREN

Order No. DA8511644

MICHOU, MARIA, PH.D. *University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*, 1985. 281pp. Chairperson: Robert L. Sprague

This investigation examined the communicative differences between normal and hyperactive children. Ten minutes of conversations of 6 normal, 6 hyperactive, and 6 mixed speaker-listener dyads of male American 2nd and 3rd graders were analyzed according to a taxonomy of linguistic, psycholinguistic, interactional, and compliance variables.

The taxonomy consisted of 7 quantitatively and 5 qualitatively derived variables. The 5 qualitative variables were derived from ratings of 20 adult raters who rated all the conversations for clarity, flow, staying on task, amount of nonsense, and overall organization.

Analyses of variance and Duncan's test of significance revealed significant differences between the 3 groups for Amount of compliance with equipment characteristics--which was one of the quantitative variables--in addition to differences for all 5 qualitative variables.

There were no differences whatsoever for either the Linguistic (Completeness of sentences and Amount of dysfluency), or the Psycholinguistic (Interruptions and overlaps, Amount of imperatives, Amount of aggressive language, and Amount of shouting at partner) variables that were examined.

Concerning the direction of differences for Compliance with equipment characteristics, the hyperactive was significantly different from both the normal and the mixed conversational groups. For the 5 qualitative variables, the normal children were different from the other two groups, while there were no differences between the hyperactive and the mixed groups. This finding was discussed in relation to the specific age-group that was studied. More generally, a likely interpretation is that hyperactive children have a strong influence on their conversational partners towards disorganizing and disorienting them from the purpose of a particular conversation. One possible consequence of such a situation might be that normal children, either consciously or unconsciously, become tired of the conversational behaviors to which they have been "carried away". It is moreover possible that the negative feelings attached are eventually transferred to their hyperactive conversational partners who are also their peers.

The significance of properly functioning arousal mechanisms, including the monitoring of one's level of arousal, for communication were then stressed. Finally, some suggestions for education in interpersonal skills were made, followed by a note of caution concerning generalizations, and suggestions for further studies in the area.

SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION VS. CLASSROOM COMMUNICATION: AN APPROACH TO THE RESEARCH VS. TEACHING QUESTION

Order No. DA8508608

NEAL, EDWARD MAX, PH.D. *The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*, 1984. 130pp. Director: James Morrison

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between scholarly communication and classroom communication with respect to their impact on perceived teaching effectiveness. As a research scholar, a university professor communicates with his/her peers in publications and in professional meetings using a highly specialized, "scholarly" style of communication. This type of communication is quite different from the style required to teach undergraduates, who need and expect readily comprehensible explication of the course material.

Since previous research has revealed no consistent association between research and teaching effectiveness (or even between years of experience and teaching effectiveness), this communication factor may provide the key to these relationships. Two causal models were developed to test the hypothesis that research productivity, as an indicator of scholarly communication, may affect classroom communication and thereby have an impact on teaching effectiveness. Additional variables which have some influence on student ratings of teaching effectiveness (class size, expected grade, and whether the course is required of elective) were also included in the models.

The sample of teachers (n = 60) was drawn from faculty members in the Division of Academic Affairs at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Graduate teaching assistants, lecturers, and adjunct faculty were excluded from the pool from which the random sample was drawn. Each professor distributed student questionnaires to one randomly-selected undergraduate class (1,969 students participated) and filled out special faculty questionnaires themselves.

Although the models failed to disclose any direct of indirect relationship between scholarly activity and perceived teaching effectiveness, the results do indicate that a professor's verbal and nonverbal classroom communication behaviors have a profound effect on student perceptions of the quality of teaching. In the first causal model, classroom communication was used as a single intervening variable, and in the second model it was divided into its four components: friendly/attentive, dramatic/animated, relaxed, and

ENHANCED CONVERSATIONAL RECALL AND REDUCED CONVERSATIONAL INTERFERENCE AS A FUNCTION OF COGNITIVE COMPLEXITY

Order No. DA8513848

NEULIEP, JAMES WILLIAM, PH.D. *The University of Oklahoma*, 1985. 104pp. Major Professor: Gustav W. Friedrich

This study investigated the influence of cognitive complexity on the ability to recall conversations. It was hypothesized that because of highly differentiated and abstract cognitive systems, cognitively complex individuals would be able to recall conversations better than non-complex individuals. Specifically, it was deduced that cognitive complexity would be a significant predictor of person- and subject-relevant recall under normal conditions and an interference condition. Subjects (N = 46) viewed a video-taped conversation between two persons and were given a recall test to measure their recall ability. Results indicated that cognitive complexity was not a significant predictor of person-relevant information but was a significant predictor of subject-relevant information, although the results were in the opposite of the expected direction.

APPROACHES TO COMMUNICATION POLICY: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE BRITISH AND AMERICAN EXAMPLES

Order No. DA8514809

OPOBIKE, LAURA, PH.D. *University of Oregon*, 1985. 269pp.

This study derives from the awareness that the impact of rapid technological developments in communication on national lifestyles requires nations to design coherent national policies to guide the development and use of these technologies.

It adopts the perspective that policies are the products of processes of selection from the empirical and normative environments of a given country, and that the national character of the communication system evolves as an outcome of cumulative policies.

This policy perspective recognizes a problematic situation: that the pace of changes in communication technologies is swamping many developing nations and virtually stampeding them into adopting policies and systems from other sources as guides.

The study takes the theoretical position that the tendency to adopt policies and systems represents uncritical deference to what is technically the result of particular selections and combinations of empirical and normative determinants. A deferential approach to communication policy, the study argues, fails to meet the challenge to developing countries to devise coherent national communication policies that ensure the needed stability and flexibility for the system to fulfill any social purpose. It leaves unexplored whatever resources the indigenous culture might have for coping with communication problems.

From the research problems posed by this theoretical stance, the study focuses on the problem of defining characteristic processes of a "non-deferential" approach, and uses the British and American experiences in designing broadcast communication policy as case studies.

Since policies in democracies are formulated through debates in institutional settings, the study postulates that a study of the debates over broadcast policy would provide evidence of issue transformation and yield distinctive patterns to justify their description as a characteristic national approach.

Analysis of the data suggests that while such definite and distinctive patterns would be difficult to establish conclusively, the emphases and justifications applied to specific issues indicate trends in ways of treating specific policy questions clearly enough for them to be associated with each of the two countries. The distinctions in approaches are thus definable in terms of degrees of difference over common concerns.

COMMUNICATING CULTURE: ORAL HISTORIES OF TEN MIDDLE-MANAGEMENT WOMEN

Order No. DA8516081

PERRY, LINDA A. M., PH.D. *The Pennsylvania State University*, 1985. 140pp. Adviser: Gerald M. Phillips

The culture of a society, including its organizational culture, is transmitted through communication (Carey, 1975). This study is intended to investigate that communication role. First, distinctions between organizational structure, climate, and culture are drawn. When studying organizations, one studies structure; when studying people's behavior in organizations, one studies climate; when studying people's experience of the organization's structure and climate, one studies culture.

Because of the multi-ordinal nature of the term "socialization," I prefer the term "enculturation." *Organizational enculturation is the process wherein newcomers adopt and are adopted by the culture of their organizations.*

I took oral histories of ten middle managers to discover how culture is transmitted through communication. I attempted to isolate "memorable messages" (Knapp, Stohl, and Reardon, 1981) and "critical incidents" (Flanagan, 1954) that seem to have an effect on the subjects' organizational enculturation. Criteria were set for the selection of both the subjects and the organizations to best address the question, *According to female managers' perceptions, what is the nature of the messages that either aided or hampered their enculturation into their respective organizations?*

A majority of the investigators of organizations have used

quantitative methods. But, "quantity will not yield form" (Jonas, 1951, p. 334). Thus, I attempted qualitatively to discover themes within messages across subjects. First I placed onto sort cards excerpts from the taped interviewees' conversations that were accounts of messages or incidents that seemed to have some bearing on their organizational enculturation. Next, I arranged the sort cards into common issues and themes. Finally, I returned to the tape recorded interviews to ensure that the subjects' original meanings were not lost in the analysis process.

Analysis of data resulted in the isolation of thirteen themes in five categories. The five categories were messages the subjects received from, sent to, or heard about (1) the organization, (2) superiors, (3) subordinates, (4) peers, and (5) themselves. A residual finding--that the traditional model of communication does not account for the dynamics and dialectics of communication--resulted in the development of a "communecology" model of communication (see Appendix C). It explains my perspective on communication and the role of communication in enculturation.

COMMUNICATIVE FEATURES OF EDUCATIONAL COMPUTER SOFTWARE

PHILLIPS, AMY FRIEDMAN, PH.D. *University of Southern California*, 1985. Chairman: Frederick Williams

This research identified and described the major interactive features of educational computer software as representative of a new communications medium. A large-scale survey of commercially available software was conducted and a series of cross-tabulations performed to determine how software is distributed according to intended age levels, content areas, manufacturers, and learning strategies.

Twenty-six of the more popular programs were selected and subjected to a detailed features analysis. Five categories of features were identified, including instructional, presentational, user control, usage requirements, and affective features.

Selected software designers were interviewed. Data were analyzed for descriptions of which software features function to make this an interactive medium.

Observations of computer use in classrooms and interviews with Los Angeles teachers who are currently using educational software were conducted. These data were analyzed to reveal which features affect teachers' choices of and responses to programs.

The results indicated that the more interactive programs used complex simulations and tutorials, appropriately illustrative graphics, intrinsically challenging content, and corrective feedback to actively involve students in critical and creative thinking skills. They offered greater control over the speed, content, and difficulty levels. However, these programs, which were found to be fun, interesting, and exciting, accounted for only a small percentage of the available software. The majority of programs were non-interactive drill-and-practice strategies that offered students little control, involved memorization, and used simple, repetitive feedback to teach basic curriculum areas.

The designers generally disliked drill-and-practice software and favored interactive learning strategies, user control, and entertaining affective features. Teachers with previous computer experience were willing to try complex simulations that required interaction among groups of students. Teachers with less computer experience preferred software with simple instructional strategies that could be used by individual students without supervision. Presentation features, while acknowledged to be motivating, were frequently viewed by designers and teachers as detracting from the medium's educational effectiveness.

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